

Appln. No. 09/867,180  
Amendment dated June 15, 2005  
Reply to Office Action of March 15, 2005

#### REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the present application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

The March 15, 2005 Office Action and the Examiner's comments have been carefully considered. In response, claims are cancelled and amended, and remarks are set forth below in a sincere effort to place the present application in form for allowance. The amendments are supported by the application as originally filed. Therefore, no new matter is added.

#### PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

In the Office Action claims 1 and 4-14 (incorrectly stated in the Office Action as claims 1-16) are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being obvious and unpatentable over USP 5,815,665 (Teper et al.) in view of USP 6,823,327 (Klug et al.).

In response, claims 5 and 9 are cancelled and claims 1, 4, 6-8, 10, 11 and 13 are amended. Claims 1, 6, 8, 10 and 11 are amended to more clearly define the present claimed invention over the cited references. Claims 1, 6 and 11 are independent method claims, and claims 8 and 10 are an article of manufacture claims which correspond to claims 1 and 6 respectively.

Claim 1 is directed to a method for responding to access to a service provider site (1) for providing contents via a

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communication network in which the service provider site transmits, when an access request is made from a requesting terminal (4-1) of an affiliation site (2-1) affiliated with the service provider's site (1), contents of the service provider site (1) to the requesting terminal (4-1). The method includes the steps of storing user verification data (user verification table in Fig. 5E) and an identifier (accounting office ID of Fig. 4B included in Fig. 5E) of the affiliation site affiliated with the service provider site in the service provider site, and transmitting an access request from the affiliation site to the service provider site with an identifier of the affiliation site when the affiliation site receives an access request from the requesting terminal (see Fig. 3). The method further includes determining whether or not the access request is made via the affiliation site based on whether the access request includes the identifier of the affiliation site, changing a part of the content to be transmitted to the requesting terminal to predetermined information corresponding to the affiliation site when the access request is made via the affiliation site, transmitting the content including the predetermined information to the requesting terminal to wait for a user verification request from the requesting terminal to start service provision, and storing user information of the requesting terminal relating

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to the service provision into a session control table relating to the affiliation site.

Claim 1 has been amended to specifically include the steps of storing user verification data and an identifier of the affiliation site affiliated with the service provider site in the service provider site, and transmitting an access request from the affiliation site to the service provider site with an identifier of the affiliation site when the affiliation site receives an access request from the requesting terminal of the affiliation site.

In rejecting claim 1, the Examiner relies upon the teachings of Teper et al. in view of Klug et al.

Teper et al. teach that, upon registration, users provide various account information to an online broker (such as payment information, name, etc.). When a user connects to a registered service provider (SP) site and attempts to access an online service, the SP site initiates a challenge-response authentication sequence which allows the online broker service to authenticate the user for the SP site. The SP site forwards the response message to the online broker site along with the user's unique ID and the original message. The online broker service in turn accesses the broker database to authenticate the user. The online broker service then sends a message to the SP site

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indicting whether or not the user was successfully authenticated. The online services available on the websites are accessed by the user using a single account established between the user and the online broker. The user can access the various SP sites and services using a single password and log-on procedure, and can access one SP site after another without having to re-enter a password (see col. 2, line 45 to col. 4, line 46).

In Teper et al., the online brokering service provides user-specific customization data which may be used by the service providers to customize their respective services to individual users (col. 3, line 65 to col. 4, line 14).

In contrast to the teachings of Teper et al., in the present invention the management diagnosis service provided by the enterprise support system can be used by member users of the accounting office affiliated with service business entities in addition to general member users of the support system who are registered as members in order to receive the service (page 11, lines 8-13).

By accessing the affiliation site and selecting on a screen a service provider site that provides other services, it is possible to receive different services that are linked from the affiliation site. That is, from the user side, it is possible to obtain other services through a screen of the affiliation site,

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and since it is necessary to remember only one affiliation site, usability is improved. In addition, from the affiliation site side, since it is possible to add other services that cannot be covered at its own site by contracting with other service provider sites, the method of the present invention has the effect of making it easier for the owner of the affiliation site to respond to the demands of the users since the services can be added with relative ease.

In the present claimed invention, in order to obtain other services shown on the screen of one affiliation site, the service provider site stores an identifier of the affiliation site and the user verification information in advance, and when a user selects a site that provides the user the desired service through a screen of the affiliation site, the identifier of the affiliation site is transmitted to the site which provides the selected service.

In both Teper et al. and Klug et al., when a user wishes to obtain service shown on a website, the user must directly access different websites according to the kind of service he/she wishes to obtain. Neither Teper et al. nor Klug et al. teach an affiliation site which acts as a buffer between the user and a service provider site. The references also do not disclose, teach or suggest storing user verification data and an identifier

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of the affiliation site which is affiliated with the service provider site in the service provider site and/or transmitting an access request from the affiliation site to the service provider site with the identifier of the affiliation site when the affiliation site receives an access request from the requesting terminal (see claim 1, lines 11-17).

Claim 4 is dependent on claim 1 and is patentable over the cited references in view of its dependence on claim 1 and because the references do not disclose, teach or suggest each of the limitations taught in claim 4.

Claim 6 is directed to a service information providing method in which a service provider site provides, via a communication network to a user terminal, a service item corresponding to an access request from the user terminal. The method includes the service provider site storing an identifier of affiliation sites affiliated with the service provider site, providing to the user terminal a predetermined content corresponding to a service designated by the user terminal, receiving a response information relating to the provided contents from the user terminal via the communication network and determining whether the response information is transmitted from one of the affiliation sites based on whether the access request includes the identifier of an affiliation site when a

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predetermined processing is to be performed with regard to the response information, and performing the predetermined processing based on a result of the determination.

Claim 6 recites that the service provider site stores an identifier of the affiliation site affiliated with the service provider site, and determines whether the response information is transmitted from one of the affiliation sites based on whether the access request includes the identifier of the one of the affiliation sites. As acknowledged by the Examiner, Teper et al. do not disclose, teach or suggest the second stated limitation.

In order to bridge the gap between the present claimed invention as defined by claim 6 and Teper et al., the Examiner relies upon Klug et al. Specifically, the Examiner points to column 5, lines 20-50 of Klug et al. as disclosing that the user may register at various third party websites that are affiliated with the registrar website in an agreement reached between each such third party website and the registrar website.

Applicants have studied column 5, lines 20-50 and there is no disclosure of the aforementioned limitations set forth in claim 6. Column 5 of Klug et al. does not relate to determining whether the response information is transmitted from one of the affiliation sites based on whether the access request includes the identifier of the one of the affiliation sites when

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predetermined processing is to be performed with regard to the response information as set forth in claim 6. Instead, Klug et al. discuss dissemination of user information and waiting time messages.

In columns 3 and 4 of Klug et al., there is disclosure that a user that has provided registration information to a registration website can use the previously provided registration information at a new website cooperating with the registration process so that the information need not be entered twice. In Klug et al. the contents are not provided from the user terminal via the communication network as recited in claim 6, but are instead provided from a registration website. Moreover, there is no determination in Klug et al. whether the response information is transmitted from one of the affiliation sites based on whether the access request includes the identifier of one of the affiliation sites when a predetermined processing is to be performed with regard to the response information as specifically recited in claim 6.

Moreover, the references do not disclose that the service provider site stores an identifier of the affiliation site affiliated with the service provider.



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That is, claim 6 is patentable over the cited references because the references do not disclose, teach or suggest, inter alia:

storing an identifier of the affiliation site affiliated with the service provider site in the service provider site; and/or

receiving a response information relating to the provided contents from the user terminal via the communication network and determining whether the response information is transmitted from one of the affiliation sites based on whether the access request includes the identifier of the one of the affiliation sites when a predetermined processing is to be performed with regard to the response information (see claim 6, lines 10-11 and 15-22).

In view of the foregoing, claim 6 is patentable over the cited reference under 35 USC 102 as well as 35 USC 103.

Claims 8 and 10 are article of manufacture claims which respectively correspond to claims 1 and 6. Claims 8 and 10 are patentable over the cited reference for reasons, inter alia, set forth above in connection with claims 1 and 6.

Independent claim 11 is directed to a method of providing a home page of a service provider site and a home page of an affiliation site affiliated with the service provider site via a communication network. The method includes storing an identifier of the affiliation site affiliated with the service provider site on the service provider site, receiving a request for the home page from a user by the affiliation site, transferring the

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request to the service provider site by the affiliation site, determining whether the user is a member of the affiliation site by the service provider site and transmitting a home page to the user by the service provider site when the user is a member of the affiliation site.

Claim 11 recites that the service provider site stores an identifier of the affiliation site, and that the affiliation site receives a request, transfers the request to the service provider site, which transmits a home page to the user. Teper et al. do not disclose, teach or suggest storing an identifier of the affiliation site in the service provider site, determining whether the user is a member of the affiliation site by the service provider site and transmitting a home page to the user by the service provider site when the user is a member of the affiliation site. In rejecting claim 11 the Examiner indicates that Teper et al. teach receiving a request for the home page from a user by the affiliation site and points to column 3, lines 65-67, column 4, lines 1-15 and 43-46, column 5, lines 49-55 and column 6, lines 50-60. These referenced portions of Teper et al. teach that a service request is made from a user directly to the service provider site and that the service provider site sends a challenge message to the user's computer over the Internet and the user's computer responds by generating and returning a

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cryptographic response message. The cryptographic response message authenticates the user as a member of the on-line brokering service. The service provider site then forwards a message to the on-line brokering service site which accesses the brokering database to determine whether the response message from the user was properly generated to thereby authenticate the user. Upon determining that a user is authentic, the on-line brokering service allows the service provider site to bill the user for services subsequently purchased. The service provider site sends the billing events to the on-line brokering service.

Claim 11 as amended recites that the affiliation site receives a request for the home page of the service provider from a user. This is not at all what happens in Teper et al. wherein the user makes direct access to the service provider site and the on-line brokering service is only utilized to authenticate the user and for billing purposes.

Claim 11 as amended also recites storing the identifier of the affiliation site and the affiliation site transferring the request for the home page of the service provider to the service provider site. As explained above, storing the identifier of the affiliation site is not taught in the references, and a request for the home page of the service provider is not transmitted via

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the user through the affiliation site. Teper et al. teach that the user makes the request directly to the service provider.

Klug et al. do not close the gap between the present claimed invention as defined by claim 11 and Teper et al.

That is, claim 11 is patentable over the cited references because the references do not disclose, teach or suggest, inter alia:

storing an identifier of the affiliation site affiliated with the service provider site in the service provider site; and/or

receiving, by the affiliation site, a request for the home page of the service provider from a user by the affiliation site; and/or

transferring, by the affiliation site, the request for the home page of the service provider to the service provider site with an identifier of the affiliation site (see claim 11, lines 5-12).

In view of the foregoing, claim 11 is patentable over Teper et al. and Klug et al. under 35 USC 102 as well as 35 USC 103.

Claims 12-14 are either directly or indirectly dependent on claim 11 and are patentable over the cited reference in view of their dependence on claim 11 and because the reference does not disclose, teach or suggest each of the limitations set forth in claim 11.

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In view of the foregoing, claims 1, 4, 6-8 and 10-14 are patentable over the cited reference under 35 USC 102 as well as 35 USC 103.

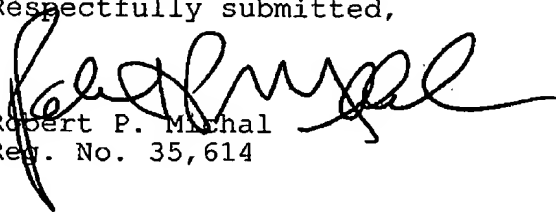
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Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner disagrees with any of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully requested to point out where there is support for a contrary view.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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